

# SUPPLEMENT

## TO THE

# NONCONFORMIST.

VOL. XXII.—NEW SERIES, No. 894.]

LONDON: WEDNESDAY, DEC. 17, 1862.

[GRATIS.]

### Literature.

(Continued from Body of Paper.)

#### THE STEPHENSONS.\*

The great popularity of Mr. Smiles' *Life of George Stephenson*, and of his subsequent volumes on the British Engineers down to Telford, must be taken as the inducement to add to the "Lives of the Engineers" a third volume which is but a revised edition of the work that first gained him reputation. Those who have the "Life of George Stephenson" have already the present volume in their possession, except certain portions which bring the story of Mr. Robert Stephenson's life to its close. Besides these additions, there are certain corrections of statements on which fuller information has been obtained by the author, and a few inserted fragments of reminiscence which have their interest, but which add nothing important to the facts of the life of the elder Stephenson, nor assist any more lively appreciation of his character than Mr. Smiles' first biography enabled the reader to reach. It is, however, right that we should add, that the more professional readers of this new volume may find the additional information relative to the early history of railways and of the men concerned in establishing them, communicated by the friends and pupils of the Stephensons, of more importance, for the sake of accuracy and completeness, than the general public, less concerned to know dates and minute particulars of invention, can possibly feel them to be. Mr. Robert Stephenson, further, was accustomed, even till shortly before his death, to send Mr. Smiles such corrections and additions as occurred to him; of which use has been made in this edition. But his most valuable contribution to the work, and one which will be prized as an authoritative sketch of early railway history, is his "Narrative of George Stephenson's Inventions and Improvements in connection with the 'Locomotive Engine and Railways':"—and this will do something to remove erroneous impressions made on professional minds by the manner in which Mr. Smiles had represented the elder Stephenson's claims to special discovery or contrivance, in a few instances, in his earlier work.

We entirely approve of Mr. Smiles' plan of incorporating the life of Mr. Robert Stephenson with that of his father. Their personal relations were such as to justify it; and their professional life was but one. Although the son completed the greatest works of his life after his father had passed away, yet the High Level Bridge, the Tubular Bridges of Conway and the Menai Straits—repeated so grandly in the Canadian and Egyptian bridges—were conceptions clearly developed, and partly realised, while the father still lived proudly to encourage and counsel his son. A large portion of Robert Stephenson's life had come under notice in the course of his father's biography; and Mr. Smiles has but had to continue it, for a few following years only, principally with such additions as narrate his public works, and give the author's impressions of his character rather than with important incidents of personal story.

But, before we enter on what relates to Robert Stephenson alone, we desire to notice a few small matters in the life of the father, on which Mr. Smiles seems fairly open to attack. It will be remembered that, in giving an account of George Stephenson's first marriage, he is rather sentimental about the charms of Fanny Henderson; and tells a good story of George's mending her shoes, and carrying them about in his pocket with enthusiastic devotion, as well as with pride in his own performance. A contemporary, speaking with evident knowledge, tells us that the shoe story does not belong at all to Fanny, but to her younger sister Ann, whom George first courted unsuccessfully; and then transferred his affections to Fanny, who was *twelve years older than himself*, and not exactly the fair and charming young maiden Mr. Smiles has delighted to picture to himself. The mention of her "twinkling feet" and "tiny shoes," on her death at thirty-seven, is very ridiculous. We think the evidence is satisfactory against Mr. Smiles' version. Again, we cannot but feel that he is wrong, on the testimony of the same critic of his work, about George's *second* marriage. Mr. Smiles denies that George had known her, and made her a matrimonial offer prior to his first marriage, but was repulsed by her father: and he has a seemingly triumphant sneer at one of his critics, the author of the article on George Stephenson in the *Britannica*, who has professed to put him right on the matter; saying, that that writer is evidently indebted altogether to a sketch of Stephenson which appeared in "Eliza Cook's Journal," and which, Mr. Smiles now begs to assure him, was erroneous, as he may boldly assert, seeing it was written by *himself*, on insufficient information which he has since sifted and corrected. It would be a very good joke against the critic if it ended there. But the contemporary to whom we have referred adduces what is to us satisfactory evidence that Mr. Smiles, to say the least, does not know the whole truth; and that he is as little warranted in wholly denying the previous acquaintance, as he is clearly wrong as to the date of Fanny Stephenson's death, is ignorant of the fact that she and George ever had a daughter, and is wrong again in the date of the marriage to Elizabeth Hindmarsh. It seems that there was a third marriage, shortly before Stephenson's death, which his biographer has altogether omitted to notice.

It is to be observed, too, that Mr. Smiles cannot resist the temptation to make a good story out of a few fragments of fact. The account of George Stephenson's efforts to give his son an education may be taken as an instance—even without first observing the inconsistency of the dates given, and without having any special knowledge additional to the author's, as to the father's means, and so on,—the extravagance of calling less than six months at Edinburgh University a "sound scientific culture," for securing which to his son the father is to be profoundly revered, and for acquiring which the son is to be greatly admired, being only representative of an exaggeration which runs through the whole story. One also detects the same propensity in the story of the first trial of the safety-lamp,—a story which must have been derived from one of the parties present; but which, in Mr. Smiles' form of it, could not have been derived from George himself; and which is greatly toned down, so as to be something quite different from the instance of self-devoting heroism Mr. Smiles has represented, by the matter-of-fact version of Mr. Wood, the next person of importance in the experimenting party.

Even in this revised edition of his work, which

the public have given him every inducement to perfect, Mr. Smiles is not a little roundabout and repetitious on small things; while there are some of the greatest passages in the lives of the Stephensons that are but very meagrely narrated, and apparently without any original sources of information. We think, too, the spirit of an advocate is rather strong in the author. Anyhow, the errors of opinion or theory into which even Stephensons fell, are not recognised; and justice is done but sparingly to those who were either their assistants or competitors on great occasions.

We now turn to the particulars which Mr. Smiles has supplied of the later life of Robert Stephenson. In 1824, he went to Columbia, as engineer of the Mining Association. Many interesting facts are brought together, partly from information supplied by Mr. Illingworth, the commercial manager of the mining company, and partly from Mr. Stephenson's own "Scraps from my Note-book in Columbia," published in the "National Magazine" of 1837. After somewhat more than three years' absence he returned home, at a time when the factory he had laboured with his father to establish at Newcastle much required his presence; and when he could assist the fortunes of the locomotive, in its darkest hour, when both horse haulage and fixed engines had the preference with many railway authorities and engineers, as the most desirable power to be used on the nearly-completed Manchester and Liverpool line. The proffered prize of 500*l.* by the directors, and the construction of the "Rocket," the story of which is so well-known, were the great facts that followed Robert Stephenson's return to railway engineering in England. We need not here repeat the eventful facts of the completion and opening of the line between the metropolis and port of the cotton districts—they are too commonly known; and they are now appreciated in their real importance to the inland communication and commerce of every country in the world. In 1830, he was appointed engineer to the Leicester and Swannington railway, intended to open up a communication between the former town and the coal-fields in the western part of the county. As a practical geologist, he formed the opinion that coal would be found at Snibston, on that line, about fourteen miles from Leicester; where an estate was advertised for sale; which he and his father, after a careful inspection, purchased. In attempting to reach the coal, there was need enough, under many discouragements, for the use of George Stephenson's old motto, "Persevere": and eventually a colliery was established on a large scale, which not only rewarded the promoters, but saved 40,000*l.* per annum to the town of Leicester, besides giving great impetus to the manufacturing prosperity of the place.

When the London and Birmingham Railway was projected, and an engineer was to be appointed, Robert Stephenson was opposed to a rival with whom he had often been in collision during the Liverpool and Manchester undertaking. The firmness of his father served his turn; and Robert was selected—not, formally, it would seem, in conjunction with his father, as Mr. Smiles says, but solely; though for all practical ends it was undoubtedly an appointment of the one with and in the person of the other. The history of the progress of the line, now the North-Western, is pretty well known; and need not be traced here. From this period until comparatively a short time before his death, Mr. Stephenson was engaged in the greatest railway works of the kingdom. As engineer of the Newcastle and Berwick lines, he constructed the High-level-bridge at the former, and the Royal Border-

\* *Lives of the Engineers*. By SAMUEL SMILES. Vol. III. *George and Robert Stephenson*. With portraits and numerous illustrations. London: John Murray.

bridge at the latter place. We shall never forget passing over both before their final completion,—it was with profound astonishment and something like awe, that we saw the giant wonder that stretches 4,000 feet across the gorge between Newcastle and Gateshead, carrying roads for trains, ordinary vehicles, and foot-passengers; but that was nothing to the surprise with which we found ourselves crossing the Tweed at a giddy height above the water, and, looking suddenly out of the carriage window, found that we were slowly travelling on unprotected timbers, through which we looked down upon the river, 120 feet beneath—the bridge being then in process of construction,—a sensation which led us, and many less nervous passengers, on the return journey, to prefer alighting on the Scottish side and running through the town to rejoin the train on the other.

The narrative of the construction of the Conway and Britannia bridges, given by Mr. Smiles, adds nothing that we can detect to accounts previously given to the world; and, indeed, is less complete and picturesque than descriptions with which almost everyone is familiar.

On the death of his father, Mr. Robert Stephenson inherited "his valuable collieries, his share in the engine factory, and his large accumulation of savings, which, together with the fortune he had himself amassed by railway work, gave him the position of an engineer—millionaire—the first of his race. He continued, however, to live in a quiet style; and although he bought occasional pictures and statues, and indulged in the luxury of a yacht, he did not live up to his income, which went on rapidly accumulating until his death." There was now no need for him to undertake the more harassing work of his profession; and his own and his father's friend, Edward Pease, counselled him to such measure of retirement as the labours and anxieties of some of his great works had made almost indispensable. He expressed in reply his concurrence; and added pious words of hope that the Divine blessing would accompany him, and give him quiet happiness in comparative repose. Yet he had to see his tubular bridges at Montreal and across the Nile completed; and the celebrated and magnificent structure, the Victoria Bridge, only sixty yards short of two miles in length, was erected from his designs.

One of his last labours was to assist his rival and friend, Brunel, at his own request, in the launching of the Great Eastern. That day he was dressed without great coat and in thin boots; and about afternoon, he accidentally fell up to his middle in Thames mud. He could not be prevailed on to leave the yard, or even to dry himself, but stuck to his work and cigars until dark. The effect was, that he had an attack of inflammation of the lungs, which kept him to his bed a fortnight. In 1859, in indifferent health, he sailed for Norway; and was there seized with the illness which terminated his illustrious career. He died on the 12th of October, aged fifty-five—as nearly as he himself knew his age, which had not been registered. Friends and great men laid him down in England's hallowed resting-place of her noblest dead, by the side of Telford, in Westminster Abbey.

Mr. Stephenson was married in 1829; but his wife died, without issue, in 1842; and he did not marry again. He was returned to Parliament for Whitby, in 1847; but was never a prominent member of the House. He was a Protectionist, strange to say, herein differing from his father; but the politics of both were vague and undecided.

Robert Stephenson "almost worshipped his father's memory"; and "inherited his kindly spirit and benevolent disposition." He was a cautious and practical man. In society "simple, unobtrusive, and modest"; but so attractive that "Sir John Lawrence has said of him, that 'he was, of all others, the man he most delighted to meet in England—he was so manly, yet gentle, and withal so great.'"

Mr. Smiles writes very interestingly; and makes the best of all his materials. His work will surely be sealed with as high public approbation as its predecessors. We have not refrained from admitting that it has, in our judgment, defects and errors; but we are not therefore blind or indifferent to its high merits. Looking, however, at the small amount of special material Mr. Smiles seems to have had at his command, as compared with the achievements and importance of the man, we can hardly doubt that there will yet be produced another fuller and more detailed life of Robert Stephenson.

This volume has fine portraits of father and son; and some seventy woodcuts, from drawings by Messrs Leitch and Skelton, illustrative of the scenery of the lines, or representing engines of various dates, and great railway structures. These are all new, and most artistic and interesting.

## TWO NEW TALES.

*Rachel Noble's Experience.* By BRUCE EDWARDS. Glasgow: Scottish Temperance League. London: Houlston and Wright, and W. Tweedie.

We may fairly congratulate the Scottish Temperance League on having obtained a better book for their money than "Danesbury House." To those who admire the tale just named, this will of course appear no faint praise; and those who do not may be glad to learn that the prizes offered by a society so energetic and useful are attracting greater talent to the support of teetotalism. The mathematical genius who in discussing the merits of "Paradise Lost" demanded bluntly, "What does it prove?" is usually thought to have asked a very absurd question. But really in our time we have changed all that. Science amuses a leisure hour; and works of fiction do all but finish up with a Q.E.D. It is almost a matter of course now to expect entertainment, or even the delight of an excited imagination from scientific books; and it can hardly be thought any longer unnatural to ask of a new imaginative work, "What does it prove?" What then does "Rachel Noble's Experience" prove? We think it succeeds in proving with admirable force, that if we live in a house where the mother is given to drinking, while the whole family has a constitutional tendency to the same thing, it is our duty to prevent, so far as we can, the introduction of any intoxicating drinks either for ourselves or any one else. No doubt it has been thought to prove more than this; otherwise the prize would scarcely have been awarded. The arguments, however, by which anything farther than this is sustained are liable to the objection made by the shrewd old lion in the fable, who refused to be convinced by the sculptured representation of man's victory. The heroine of the story accepts the dubious situation of "companion to a lady," and finds that she is required to take care of an extremely drunken woman. The husband of the latter has made a great deal of money by the wine and spirit trade in its worst form. His children and servants are infected with a tendency to excessive drinking, and their various fortunes form the web of the story. The marriage of a conceited and wealthy beauty to an omnibus cab forms a prominent feature. We suspect that this is a reminiscence of an actual fact; but it is not the less out of harmony with those laws of probability which ought to be respected in fiction. The narrative is lively; the action brisk; and the whole book is in that clever feminine style which is popular in our times. The following is a fair specimen. Rachel is seeking to make a convert of the servant, who is engaged to be married:—

"Sarah was roused, and in her native Doric said, 'But what way should we dae wrang; we're nae mair likely tae dae wrang than ither folk.'

"Not a bit more," I said, 'but at least as much so, and it's well to be on the safe side, and there is nothing so safe for a young tradesman as to be a total abstainer.'

"But Tammas disna drink," she said, missing the point of what I had been saying, and again butting up against the one side of the thing that presented itself to her. 'Naeboddy ever laid that till him; I never saw speerits on him but ance.'

"Well, it was once too often, and a very strong reason for urging him to become a total abstainer. Try your influence, Sarah; you'll not regret it, take my word for it."

"Weel, weel, mem, I'll speak tae him; but I dinna see what way puir folks should want their comforts, if they can come at them, mair than rich folk."

"Now, Sarah, don't misunderstand me. I dare say there is nobody but would wish the poor every comfort, but is it a comfort, or even a necessary, that young healthy persons should drink spirits? If you can't see that, I hope Thomas will."

"Tammas disna need to be a teetotaler, he's no gien tae drinking."

Whether "Tammas" justified Sarah's confidence or not will be best discovered in the book itself.

*The Duchess of Trajetto.* By the Author of "Mary Powell." London: Arthur Hall and Co.

This is a historical tale of the abortive, but deeply interesting Reformation movement in Italy. The writer appears to have read extensively in the literature of the period; but we hardly think she has read herself thoroughly into the spirit of the times. The conversations especially have a very modern tone, and too often approach that kind of piquancy which in our day is much affected by ladies who wish to be considered, if we may use their own language, "fast." It is probable, however, that to most readers this will only make the book appear more enlivening and brisk. The tale can hardly be said to have a plot. It turns on the conversion of a beautiful young widow, the Duchess of Trajetto, by the advocates of the Reformed religion, and her law-suits and her lovers alike play their parts in the preparation of her mind. At the present time when all eyes are turned so hopefully on Italy, it will interest many to receive some information in so pleasant a guise about the great crisis of her religious history in the beginning of the sixteenth century. The following dialogue illustrates the aim of the book and also the incongruity which we have pointed out:—

"How well, dear Ochino laboured the point of justification by faith!" exclaimed Vittoria, after their return from church. "Did you ever hear it better demonstrated?"

"To say truth, dear Vittoria," replied the Duchess, 'I scarcely heard two words of it, and don't remember

one.' The Marchioness looked shocked; but Giulia continued—

"Isabella threatens me with a law-suit, and I am determined to write to the Pope about it."

"O pray do not," cried Vittoria, 'you are always a great deal too violent.'

A little farther on:—

"Hear what St. Paul says," pursued Vittoria, sitting down beside her, and turning over the leaves of a little book.

"St. Paul knows nothing about it," muttered the Duchess.

"There you are quite mistaken," said Vittoria, still eagerly hunting up the passage; 'St. Paul knew something about everything, for he was a great genius, and an eminently practical man, besides being a holy Apostle.'

Then follows the passage about going to law before unbelievers. To say the least it sounds very strange to hear Vittoria Colonna applying this passage to a suit at the Papal Court.

There is an interesting appendix, in which the author traces the course of the attempted Reformation in Italy after the events on which her story is founded. The book is well adapted to excite the interest of the young and to illustrate the attractions of historical study.

## CHRISTMAS BOOKS FOR THE YOUNG.

Amongst books suitable for presents to our children or for school prizes, we really know none of higher character, truer interest, or more beautifully produced, than the series of "Books for the Young" issued by the Cambridge publishers, Macmillan and Co. The authors are, in several cases, of the first reputation; and in the others, are distinguished by good talent and fine culture. In point of literary merit, books for the young have seldom so much to commend them. We are glad, therefore, to see a reissue, in form and appearance the most pleasing, of eight different works; several of which have already established a name; and all of which have been, on their first publication, commended to our young friends. There is that incomparable book—*The Heroes; or, Greek Fairy Tales for My Children*; by the Rev. CHARLES KINGSLEY (Macmillan), in which the myths of Greece are so poetically and humorously unfolded and made to express deep and ever true meanings, teaching faithfulness to the right, helpfulness to man, and trust in God. It is one of the children's books that will surely become a classic; and is, in size and price, better adapted to general circulation in this new edition than in its original form. There is a rare treat for thoughtful little boys and girls who have yet to make first acquaintance with it.—For girls, there are few books of late years more fitted to touch the heart, purify the feeling, and quicken and sustain right principles, than *Agnes Hopetoun's Schools and Holidays;—the Experiences of a Little Girl*; by Mrs. OLIPHANT; author of "Margaret Maitland." (Macmillan.) We praise it now as warmly as when first it charmed us; and we have never found a young girl differ from our opinion of it.—*Ruth and her Friends; A Story for Girls* (Macmillan), has passed through two editions; and has been received with a general approbation that sustains our early judgment, that it was a very remarkable first work of its author's, and has some of the finest qualities of fiction writing, as well as perfect fitness to the tastes and circumstances of girls. It is still a favourite with us, as eminently beautiful in conception and spirit, and full of moral power. It will be remembered that it is to the same delightful writer that our children owe *Days of Old: Three Stories from Old English History* (Macmillan), which is full of truthful and charming historic pictures, is everywhere vital with moral and religious principles, and is written with a brightness of description, and with a dramatic force in the representation of character, that have made, and will always make, it one of the greatest favourites with reading boys.—*Our Year: a Child's Book in Prose and Verse*; by the author of "John Halifax, Gentleman" (Macmillan), has its best recommendation in the name of its author, now welcomed in all our homes as that of the purest and most genial writer of fiction in the present day. This book, we may remind our readers, contains sketches of the natural history of the year, broadly but vividly sketched under the several months; with verses, full of pleasantness and quiet thoughtfulness, generally containing a story, and appropriate to the progress of the seasons.—*My First Journal*, by GEORGINA M. CRAIK (Macmillan), is a little girl's diary, written with true child-feeling, by which all little girls may be softened towards those whose love and solicitude they cannot easily penetrate and understand, may be strengthened to all that is dutiful and good, and may be led into the secret of real contentment and happiness.—We still think *Little Estella*; and other *Fairy Tales* (Macmillan), one of the most interesting and wisdom-fraught of books of fairy tales; and, as we agree with Dr. George Wilson, that of such tales our children can hardly have too many, for the culture of their imagination, and for infantile entrance on the charmed realms of the ideal and the supernatural, we again commend this very graceful little work.—The most solid work of the series is *David, King of Israel*, by JOSIAH WRIGHT, M.A. (Macmillan), a work on which much reading and study have been bestowed; and than which, as we formerly said more at length, there is none better for the illustration of the history

or the practical inculcation of the moral lessons, of the life of David.—*Scenes and Stories of the Rhine*, by M. BETHAM EDWARDS, author of "Holidays Among the Mountains," with illustrations by F. W. Keyl London: Griffith, Farran, and Co.). We happen to know that young folk look anxiously to the publishing lists for Christmas and New Year of the celebrated house at the corner of St. Paul's-churchyard; and we think they are not likely to be disappointed with the provision made for their delectation this coming Yule-tide. There is everything charming in the new Rhine-book for children. The author's promise at the outset to those who will take the trip, of "plenty of adventures, funny stories, pleasant companions, odds and ends of German life, and as much history as may be learnt on a summer's day," is fulfilled to the letter, in manner so lively, and with spirit so genial, that a more engaging book could hardly be conceived. Besides very good bits of description, and pleasant incidents, there are some capital legendary tales, of which we may especially name "Rolandseck; or, The Brave Knight and Fair Ladye," the rhymed tradition of the Lurleiberg, called "The Pearly Palace," the sort of ballad named "The Silver Wedding," and the "Sparkling Narrative" of a bottle of Rhine wine. The "Chapter of Rhine Heroes" is excellent,—the account of Heidelberg interesting,—and the visit to the "Home of our Princess Alice" will, of course, be attractive to the young people who have her name as a household word. The illustrations represent German costumes and customs.—*Miracles of Nature and Marvels of Art*. With Numerous Illustrations. (London: Dean and Son.) This is a book of a kind that adheres to an old model—a collection of articles on the most diverse subjects, chiefly compiled facts, with interspersed extracts of adventure, and descriptions of often described natural curiosities. Thus, we have here steam-engines, locomotives, railways, telegraphs, ascent of the Peter Botte mountain, Grotto of Adelsberg, Giant's Causeway, Fingal's Cave, Pyramids, Great Wall of China, St. Paul's, Thames Tunnel, Ship-building, the Crystal Palace, and the International Exhibition—the latter described in a very familiar letter, supposed to be written by a jolly boy. Though only a modern reproduction in a superior form of the same sort of thing as the "Wonders of the World" that used to appear in thin paper, and had type, and worse wood-cuts, to the patronage of our own boyhood, it has really enough instruction, amusingly given, to interest boys who have few books, and pictures numerous enough to attract readers.—*Boughton Grange, and Some Passages in the History of its Owner*. (London: Religious Tract Society.) In this story there is great variety of scene and incident, and the separate probabilities are fairly preserved, although the coherence of the whole is artificial only. There is some eye for characters shown in the persons of the tale; but the common fault of religious fiction attaches to them,—the bad are too heartlessly bad, and the good too goody good. The religious purpose of the book is sound, and clearly developed. But rash and sweeping things are sometimes said,—as in attributing want of principle, and selfish, blind pursuit of interest, as characteristic of the whole fashionable world. It is fiction for the little cultivated, and not the best of its own order.—*China and its People*; by a Missionary's Wife. (London: J. Nisbet and Co.)—is a pretty little volume, abundantly illustrated, from which children may learn more of China—the country, the people, the cities and towns, the open ports, the religions, the schools, the domestic habits, the child life, &c., and the other elements of a highly developed social condition—than their seniors had any chance of knowing till within these few years. "Aunt Helen" has lived among the things and people she describes; and there is distinctness, bright colour, and the glow of life, to be found in all her little book; which, also, is exceedingly simple and pleasant in manner, and carries home good lessons gently to its little readers' hearts.—*Letters of William Cowper*; being a Selection from his Correspondence, with Sketch of his Life, &c. (London: Religious Tract Society.) Those who are accustomed to delight themselves with the letters of Cowper, which Southey, Jeffrey, Robert Hall, and other of our finest minds, have pronounced to be the best and most beautiful specimens of epistolary writing in the language, will be very pleased to see a selection made from them for popular use; and will believe that it requires only to be known to become universally circulated. Those preferred for this volume by the editor, are letters that bring out the personal life and experiences of the poet, or have direct relation to some interests of religion or literature. A well-written sketch of his life opens the volume, and is followed by very useful brief sketches of the correspondents of Cowper, to whom the letters selected were addressed. The volume greatly pleases us; and will, we hope, be remembered by those who desire to make a simple but valuable religious present.—*Realities: or, The Manifestations of God in Past Ages Considered as Earnests of the Future*. By E. R. (London: W. Yapp.) This volume claims to be, or is advertised as, a "Present for Christmas," or we should not notice it here. It contains the Old Testament history down to the death of Samuel. It is well studied, sensible in its practical remarks, and by the marginal notes is made convenient for reference. But it is, as we think, the product of a mere whim:—for the text is printed in various colours "intended to depict the co-relations of the sin of man and the

"judgments and mercies of the Lord"—black ink for the general narrative, red for sin, blue for judgments, and purple for mercies! It is an odd notion, and the carrying-out of it does not, as it seems to us, at all assist the intelligibility or impressiveness of the work.—*Kingston's Annual for Boys*, 1863 (Sampson Low, Son, and Co.), is the fourth of this series, and scarcely needs a word from us to herald its appearance. It is emphatically a book for boys, both old and young, and we have had as much pleasure in reading it as one of ours has had in cracking his sides over it. It consists of a series of tales, mostly well told and many capitally illustrated, together with "Games for Winter," poetry, and other pleasant varieties. Specially amusing, and, we may say, drolly instructive, is "The Author's Progress," in fourteen "Fyttes"; each with its comic tableau, that the brain-workers will not despise, and which children will thoroughly enjoy. We do not want books with a moral at this festive season, but we can assure our readers that a healthy tone of religiousness pervades the whole book, and that for a certain class of youth, boys or girls, either, getting on in their "teens," scarcely a better Christmas present could be found. It is a handsome book, beautifully got up, and is sure, we venture to predict, of a wide circulation and of large family approval.—*Snow Flakes and the Stories they told the Children*, by M. B. EDWARDS,—illustrated by H. K. Browne, published by the same firm, is of a different character. The idea is a very pretty one, of making the snow-flakes tell their stories in succession to a group of children, who look upon them as fairies come from some other land. The children listen, and we hope will learn

"How to live a snow-white life,  
Free from jealousy and strife,"

from these pleasant pages. We need scarcely say that the illustrations are of great merit. Some of them are tenderly appealing, and finished with exquisite grace. We fancy "Waldmann and his Masters" will be a great favourite with all; to us it has had great attractiveness. The poetry may not be of the highest order, or even of equal merit; but the book is a good book, and has had our cordial greeting round our winter fire.—*Play-room Stories; or, how to make peace*. By GEORGINA M. CRAIK. (Griffith and Farran.) These are veritable stories to be read one at a time, and one in a day only, to make the pleasure last the longer to the young folks. There are only five stories about a "Giant," and "Johnny," and "So-fat and Mew-mew," &c., but they are well and amusingly told, and even "Tom," who hates stories that begin with "Once upon a time," and "Dick," who was bent upon a parlour misdemeanour, are subdued under the wise wit of "A. Z.," who tells the tales, and finds as the result that she, having "put away her work" to tell them, has brought Tom, and Dick, and Kitty, and even "that little atom of a thing," "Gracie," into the happiest possible humour with themselves, one another, and all the world besides. This little blue-covered volume is a very charming one, and we should not be surprised if our young friends find themselves now and then, like Kitty, a little inclined to cry, and afterwards to laugh, as they read Miss Craik's Christmas book.—*The Story of Peter Parley's own Life*. From the personal narrative of the late Samuel Goodrich ("Peter Parley"). Edited by his friend and admirer, FRANK FREEMAN. With Illustrations. (Sampson Low, Son, and Co.) There have been a great many pseudo Peter Parleys, but only one real one, whose books were always devoured by book-loving young people. Who this Peter Parley was, and how he had been everywhere, and seemed to know everything, and could write about the land and the sea, and birds and beasts, and all other things and creatures, were often sore puzzles to his admirers. Well, here they will have the mystery solved, and Peter Parley's life related to them in all truthfulness by one who knew him well and esteemed him much. Samuel Goodrich was the son of a Congregational minister in Connecticut, who upon 80l. a year managed to bring up a large family, and to leave them a good estate at his death. In early life he had to rough it "pretty considerably"; but he had a great strength of "push" in him, and so he got on; visited London, went to Scotland, saw all the literary lions of that day—Scott, Irving, Christopher North, &c.; became an author for a special purpose; was appointed United States Consul at Paris, where in 1854 he wrote the greater part of this autobiography; and, having returned home, died at New York in 1860 of disease of the heart. The book is of course tinged, sometimes too deeply, with American inflations, and occasionally disfigured with anecdotes that have little relatedness to the life-story. Still the book is very readable, and worthy of a place on the good biography shelf. Chatty and gossip, it is always entertaining, and often rises into those higher elements of human purpose and striving that brace the mind to deeds of duty and instruction of discipline that the best of us require. "Peter Parley," though not a great man in the conventional sense of the term, was great in the sense of goodness, geniality, and a life devoted to the practically useful and pleasant for the reading of juveniles. We shall hope to welcome his successor next year, meantime we wish this racy book a good success.—*Fickle Flora, and her Seaside Friends*. By EMMA DAVENPORT. London: Griffith and Farran, St. Paul's-churchyard. Flora and Caroline were school-companions, and enthusiastic friends as a matter of course; they grow up together;

go to Scarborough on a visit; study the aquarium and the common objects of the sea-shore; during which Flora the fickle deserts her faithful Caroline for the aristocratic society of some other "girls"; repents ultimately, and is re-united to her old friend on the most affectionate terms. There is a little too much didactic teaching made too prominent, and sometimes an attempt at conchological and ichthyological lore that might as well have been left out. Should the authoress write another Christmas book—and we hope her life will be spared to write many—we should advise her—and we say this with all respectfulness—not to let a little girl—Caroline, who is altogether too good, and ought to have gone to heaven in model fashion—say that "Anything about Oliver Cromwell never pleases me"; nor should she make the estimable mother reply that, "Certainly, he was not a pleasant personage." We should be glad to give this book a heartier commendation, but we do not like religion-and-water for a child's night dose. The illustrations, by "John Absolon," are nothing extraordinary. The descriptions of Scarborough scenery are good, and the book will doubtless sell amongst the many visitors to that healthy town, concerning which we are informed that that "new building is to be a large hotel," "showing that Scarborough is an increasing place."—*Shakespeare's Songs and Sonnets*. Illustrated by John Gilbert. (Sampson Low, Son, and Co.) This is a unique gem of a book. Few but earnest students of Shakespeare,—and to appreciate him he must be studied and not merely read,—know what overflowing wealth of beauty and of song lie hid in the little stray bits interspersed with his majestic dramas. "The Publishers of this little volume are hopeful that in bringing together 'in an accessible form the whole of Shakespeare's songs, and the best part of his sonnets, in enriching them 'with the graceful adornments of Mr. Gilbert's pencil, and in presenting them with all the advantages of choice type and paper, they are doing becoming 'homage to the great poet, and an acceptable service to 'his world-spread readers.' Such is the aspiration of the publishers of this elegant volume, and we can honestly say it is realised. We thought we understood these sonnets,—for it is not yesterday that we steeped our mind in Shakespeare,—but not until we looked on these fairy illustrations of the facile pencil of Mr. Gilbert did we have so deep an insight into the subtle meaning of these exquisite songs. We need not particularise our favourites, for they are many; but all lovers of our greatest poet will linger lovingly over these most charming illustrations of the lighter parts of those tragedies and comedies that hold their readers entranced until they are 'thoroughly' read. Look again at "Where the bee sucks"; poor Lear's song, "Blow, blow, thou winter wind"; Ophelia's frenzied "And will he not come again?" and others of equal merits, and then this our warmest praise will be justified. This rich contribution to our poetic literature will be certain to command large approbation, and needs no words of ours to introduce it into the circle of all appreciative admirers of the bard, whose words are household with us, and who has laid the English language under greater indebtedness than any other single writer. We greet this book with a right hearty Christmas greeting, and in doing so, only forestal its reception by our readers.

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